LINKS Program

By: Noemi Pascual

Beth Green is the LINKS Coordinator for Randolph County Department of Social Services.

What is the LINKS program? The LINKS is a program for youth ages 13 to 21 who are or who were previously in foster care. The purpose of the program is to help youth transition to adulthood. The LINKS program helps in seven different aspects: economic self-sufficiency, safe and stable housing , academic or vocational achievement, connections to a personal support network, postponed parenthood, avoidance of high risk behaviors, and needed health care not covered by Medicaid or public health insurance. Some of the foster kids receive scholarships for college, but not all are eligible for a scholarship. There are different criteria that foster kids have to meet to receive funding. The two scholarship programs that are available to some of the foster kids are NCReach and ETV (Education Training Voucher). The criteria that need to be met in order to qualify can be found online on their website. “I believe the purpose for this college funding is to encourage youth to seek higher education in order to become more successful in their adult lives and to provide a way for those who wouldn’t normally be able to attend college due to financial circumstances,” said Beth Green. Usually only a few youths from Randolph County apply for this scholarship each year. Many of our foster kids do not qualify, but some of the ones that do choose not to take advantage of the opportunity.